



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language services and collections in NSLA libraries

July 2014

This statement is linked to the *National Position Statement for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Library Services and Collections* (NSLA, 2014) and has been formulated in consultation with [First Languages Australia](#) (FLA). It is intended to guide progressive action across National, State and Territory library institutions in the collection and preservation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language materials and resources.

National and State Libraries Australasia (NSLA) recognises the reclamation of first languages in Australia as a proven and powerful means of enhancing community well-being, strengthening community capacity and resilience, and improving awareness and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and history.

NSLA library collections contain important language material, much of which remains unidentified and has been hidden or inaccessible to Indigenous communities. NSLA libraries acknowledge:

- The right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to be informed about language materials relating to their own culture and heritage
- The role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities as custodians of language as central to the development of policy and practice
- The right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to determine use and access provisions for language materials which may be community controlled (secret/sacred/sorrow) or require cultural consideration.

NSLA will promote best practice across the library and information sector, with the following shared objectives:

- Identification of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language materials held within library collections
- Accessibility of language materials to the communities they pertain to as a first priority, and to the broader community in accordance with recognised protocols
- Discoverability of identified materials and resources through use of shared descriptors and upgraded bibliographic metadata in local and shared catalogues
- Utilisation of Trove as the shared and freely accessible catalogue of resources and digital content from Australian libraries and other cultural collections, and as the platform for engaging users via social media and through digital volunteer activities such as tagging, commenting, and improving newspaper text
- Digitisation of published and unpublished Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language materials, to be made accessible through individual NSLA catalogues and Trove if culturally appropriate
- Collection of born digital language materials produced by and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- Collaboration with FLA to engage and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in creating, collecting and raising awareness about language materials, including materials not held by NSLA libraries.

This statement will be reviewed in July 2015.

